



The old city jail. —Submitted by Lavon Provost

the word and two of them arrested him, but not without a very real struggle. Then they freed him in time to play in a wheelchair at the hospital and get in the way as patients were rolled in on gurneys. But the EMTs and hospital staff skillfully worked around him.

The other scene-stealer was "the hysterical woman", played by Kristi Bevan, an IGA employee. She did an excellent job of continual hysterical screaming and crying, and demanding information on the conditions of her fellow employees. She was so good that one experienced nurse intensely tried to reassure and calm her, believing the situation was real until she unwrapped the fake burn on the patient's arm.

But the two scene-stealers were not just thrown in to add to the excitement. "Distracters" as they are called, were an important part of the exercise, explained Eileen North, emergency room director at

soon as they come aboard, 'You go to this one. This is what they have.' His job is to make sure everyone is treated."

Murdock also had to deal with the "drunk", sending him to fetch gurneys and other equipment from the ambulance, to get him out of the way.

When the patients arrive at the hospital, a triage nurse once again prioritizes them. Even in a drill, the hospital emergency staff must follow through as they would in a real disaster emergency, calling in extra help, and determining what each patient needs, from x-rays to helicopter transportation to another hospital. But they stop short of actually taking x-rays and calling the helicopter.

One problem that had to be considered in planning and carrying out the drill was that a lot of people in the community monitor emergency communications on their own scanners, and most peo-